



State Senator **NANCY CASSIS** *E-NEWS UPDATE*

Town Hall Meetings – My first Town Hall meeting in February was a success, thanks to the many residents who came out to share their ideas. There are two additional opportunities this month for you to discuss with me what you think the state's budget priorities should be, whether education, health care, a thriving economy, transportation or public safety, etc.

The two meetings, each held from 6:30 to 8 p.m., will take place:

Monday, March 28

Novi City Building
45175 W. 10 Mile
Novi, MI 48375
Council Chambers

Thursday, March 31

Richardson Senior Center
1485 Oakley Park Dr.
Commerce Twp., MI 48390
Meeting Room

I hope you take this opportunity to attend and share your thoughts and ideas so that I can be an effective voice in Lansing on your behalf.

SAVE The Children , Early Intervention & Prevention in Grades K-3 – Last week, I introduced a landmark legislative package focusing on early intervention. The aim of the measures is to prevent early school failure in grades K-3.

The legislation will: assist children to become early successful learners; encourage alliances between home, parents and school; and provide valuable training for teachers to implement prevention and intervention programs.

As a state and as a society, it is important to support a robust, stable and expanding economy with a work force that can meet the challenges of our increasingly technological and knowledge-based economy. At this time, when educational success is considered an absolute necessity for life success, this legislation will help students get the best start to be successful in the classroom and in life.

I sponsored the core bill in the package establishing the Early Intervention Grant Program. The bill calls for setting up 10 model sites that already have implemented Intervention Support Teams. These teams can then train up to 40 other sites in setting up early intervention programs.

In Northville Public Schools, Intervention Support Teams have helped reduce the special education placement rate from 10.2 percent in the 1992-93 school year to 5.38 percent in the 2004-05 school year. In that same time frame, the state special education placement rate has steadily increased from 10.8 percent to more than 14 percent. Early intervention works!

Another bill changes the age requirement for beginning kindergarten in order to foster developmental school readiness. Currently, students must be 5 years old by Dec. 1 to enroll in kindergarten. The legislation would change the law so that in the 2005-06 school year, a child may enroll if they are at least 5 by Nov 1, 2005. For 2006-07, a child may enroll if they are 5 by Oct. 1, 2006. For 2007-08, and each succeeding school year, a child may enroll if they are 5 by Sept. 1 of the school year of enrollment. The impetus for this bill came from kindergarten teachers who, based on their experience, say that many children simply need that extra time before starting school.

Contact Information:

The E-News Update by Senator Nancy Cassis is designed to provide residents and organizations with a periodic update of my activity in Lansing. If you have any questions or do not wish to receive this e-mail, please contact my office.

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